Why Study a Foreign Language?

Assembled by Carrie E. Gold, 2012

CarrieEGold@gmail.com

Please share with others and/or adapt the contents according to your needs.

#1. You get to start from the beginning. English and math class depend on what you’ve learned since kindergarten. In here, you get a fresh, new start.

Jarvis, Gilbert A. “We Think We Are *Evening in Paris,* But We’re Really *Chanel.*” Foreign Language Annals, 8:2 (1975: May) p. 104-10.

#2. To get ready to travel the world.

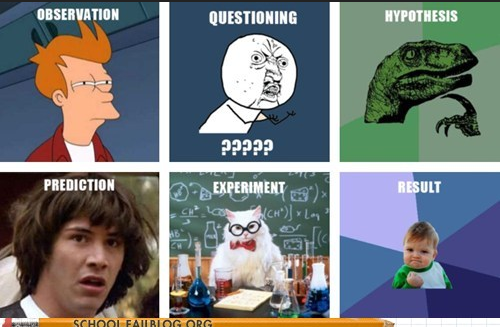
#3. Your reading skills in English will likely get better. Reading test results were compared between middle school students who studied a foreign language and those who didn’t. Those who studied a foreign language had better reading comprehension, language mechanics, and language expression.

Carr, C.G. (1994). The effect of middle school foreign language study on verbal achievement as measured by three subtests of the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills [Abstract]. *Dissertation Abstracts International -A 55*(07), 1856.

**#4. To be able to talk about other people without them knowing.**

#5. Most of the growth potential for US businesses is in overseas markets—which means the American business person of the future will be working more than ever with people from other countries. The worker of the future must be a “global worker.”

Committee for Economic Development. (2006). *Education for global leadership: The importance of international studies and foreign language education for U.S. economic and national security*. Washington, DC: Author. P. 5.

#6. Learning a foreign language will help you hypothesize and problem-solve in science class.

Kessler, C., & Quinn, M. E. (1980). Positive effects of bilingualism on Science problem-solving abilities. In J. Alatis (Ed.), *Georgetown* *Universityround table on languages and linguistics* (pp. 295-308). Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, from Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts database.

#7. To learn about other countries.

#8. It can help you be more creative. Students who study a foreign language scored higher on a test of creativity than students who don’t.

Landry, Richard G. “The Enhancement of Figural Creativity Through Second Language Learning at the Elementary School Level.” *Foreign Language Annals,* 7 (1973). 111-15.

#9. “Learning a language is a gesture of interest. It is a way to reach out to somebody and say, I care about you. I want you to know that I’m interested in not only how you talk but how you live.”

–Former President George W. Bush

Committee for Economic Development. (2006). *Education for global leadership: The importance of international studies and foreign language education for U.S. economic and national security*. Washington, DC: Author. P. 16

#10. The FBI and other government agencies don’t have enough people to translate what they need fast enough.

Committee for Economic Development. (2006). *Education for global leadership: The importance of international studies and foreign language education for U.S. economic and national security*. Washington, DC: Author. (p. 2).

#11. You will

Committee for Economic Development. (2006). *Education for global leadership: The importance of international studies and foreign language education for U.S. economic and national security*. Washington, DC: Author. P. 11.

#13. Professionals who don’t know about other cultures make embarrassing and offensive mistakes.

Microsoft mixed up the map of India in Windows 95 (India banned the software); someone labeled Kurdistan on a map in software sold in Turkey (that’s illegal there); a video game offended Arab countries by including Arabic chanting of the Koran during violent scenes. Ooops!

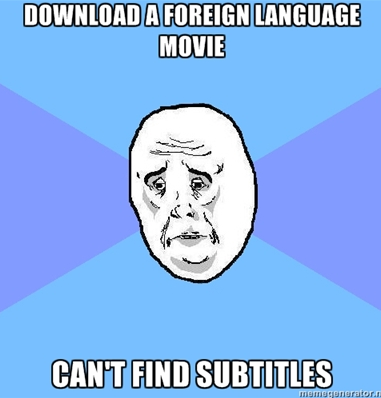
Committee for Economic Development. (2006). *Education for global leadership: The importance of international studies and foreign language education for U.S. economic and national security*. Washington, DC: Author. P. 7.

Image: <http://www.engrish.com/2010/01/diarrhoea/> Found by Jude Simmons. Found in a Japanese women’s magazine.

#14. We need to keep up with the rest of the world.

In the US, 36% of young adults speak at least 2 languages. In Sweden, 89% of young adults do. An average American business executive speaks 1.5 languages. An average business executive from the Netherlands speaks 3.9.

Committee for Economic Development. (2006). *Education for global leadership: The importance of international studies and foreign language education for U.S. economic and national security*. Washington, DC: Author. P. 7, 14.

#15. You get a whole new world of movies, music, jokes, books, and websites.

#16. It helps you figure out who you really are.

In foreign language classes, you learn about everything from sports to politics to pop music, meaning you’ll probably find something you didn’t even know you liked.

Jarvis, Gilbert A. “We Think We Are *Evening in Paris,* But We’re Really *Chanel.*” Foreign Language Annals, 8:2 (1975: May) p. 104-10.

#17. To speak it.

#18. You can pretend you’re an exotic foreigner at such ordinary places as the grocery store.

#19. It will likely help you be better at math.

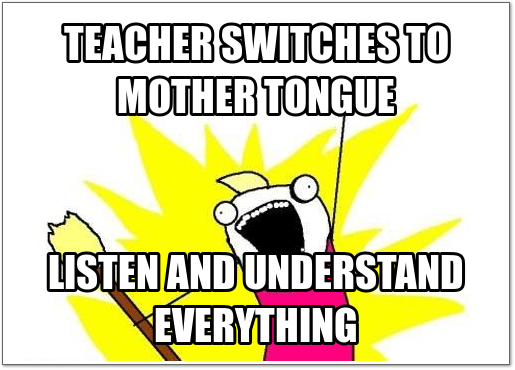
In a study, the math test scores of students who studied French were compared with students who didn’t study a language. The students who studied French had higher math scores.

Lopato, E. W. (1963). FLES and academic achievement. *The French Review, 36*(5), 499-507.

#20. People think you should.

75% of Americans think all students should learn a second language.

Davis, James A., Tom W. Smith, and Peter V. Marsden, *General Social Surveys,* 1972-2004 (Chicago, IL: National Opinion Research Center, 2005, poll conducted by Roger Center for Public Opinion Research), P. 946-947.

#21. To prepare you for “future shock”—that day when you won’t understand what’s going on in college or in a job. **Figure out how to deal with not understand-ing now rather than later.**

Jarvis, Gilbert A. “We Think We Are *Evening in Paris,* But We’re Really *Chanel.*” Foreign Language Annals, 8:2 (1975: May) p. 104-10. To be able to communicate in a foreign language.

#22. French will improve your English vocabulary. 25 to 50% of English words come from French.

Nadeau, Jean-Benoît and Julie Barlow. *The Story of French*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2006. (P. 32.)

#23. To learn to appreciate differences—at school, when you travel, or in people you’ll meet in the future. Our country is becoming more and more diverse. The Census Bureau predicts that by 2050, non-hispanic whites will constitute only 50% of the US population.

Committee for Economic Development. (2006). *Education for global leadership: The importance of international studies and foreign language education for U.S. economic and national security*. Washington, DC: Author. P. 10.

#24. The government needs people who know about other cultures who can talk with other countries and help keep our country safe.

Committee for Economic Development. (2006). *Education for global leadership: The importance of international studies and foreign language education for U.S. economic and national security*. Washington, DC: Author. P. 8-9.

#25.It helps you learn how to communicate (in any language)—important in families, friendships, school, and jobs. For example, 50% of all job losses are not because of a lack of skills, but because of an inability to communicate with others.

Jarvis, Gilbert A. “We Think We Are *Evening in Paris,* But We’re Really *Chanel.*” Foreign Language Annals, 8:2 (1975: May) p. 104-10.

#26. If you speak two or more languages, you’re less likely to experience memory loss when you get old.

Bialystok, E., Craik, F. I. M., Klein, R., & Viswanathan, M. (2004). Bilingualism, aging, and cognitive control: Evidence from the simon task. *Psychology and Aging, 19*(2), 290-303.

#27. The United States must be engaged with the rest of the world. When asked what was his greatest worry for this country, President Gerald Ford said in 1998, “I worry about the possibility we might drift back into isolationism.”

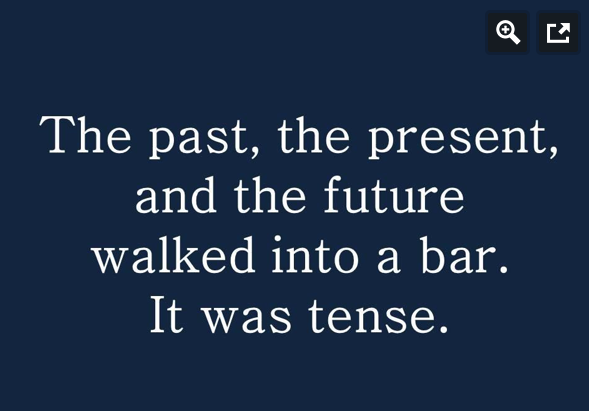
Committee for Economic Development. (2006). *Education for global leadership: The importance of international studies and foreign language education for U.S. economic and national security*. Washington, DC: Author. P. 2.

#28. To write it.

#29. You will do better in college.

Wiley, P. D. (1985). High school foreign language study and college academic performance. *Classical Outlook, 62*(2), 33-36. from ERIC database.

#30. You’ll finally learn grammar.



#31. “To solve most of the major problems facing the country today—from wiping out terrorism to minimizing global environmental problems to eliminating the scourge of AIDS—will require every young person to learn more about other regions, cultures, and languages.”

–Colin Powell, former Secretary of State

Committee for Economic Development. (2006). *Education for global leadership: The importance of international studies and foreign language education for U.S. economic and national security*. Washington, DC: Author..